

SWIMMING PHILOSOPHY

The swim program is organized to help youth develop important qualities that will carry into their adult life. Through consistent practice, participants will enhance their physical coordination, fitness and skill development. Gradual improvement in competition encourages stronger self-confidence and personal esteem. Participation in a team environment generates sportsmanship and team spirit. This program encourages family participation as support spectators, members of parent support groups, or volunteer officials at the competitive meets. The Mesa Parks and Recreation Division hopes to make your child's experience fun and rewarding.

OBJECTIVES

Each child who participates in the program shall:

- A. Be taught basic competitive swimming skills.
- B. Participate in rigorous, organized training sessions.
- C. Develop the qualities of self-discipline, sportsmanship and fitness through cooperative and regular participation in the practices and team competitions.
- D. Gain knowledge of the life-long benefits to be found in competitive swimming and pride in accomplishment.
- E. Learn the values of team membership.

ELIGIBILITY

- A. **No league swimmer may participate in any organized competitive swim program other than those approved by the League Director any time after March 31st. If a swimmer participates in an unapproved program after March 31st, they are not eligible for participation in the Mesa City League.** Any falsification of this rule will result in suspension from summer competitive leagues. **Organized competitive swim programs will include but is not limited to USA swimming, country club swimming, and YMCA's.**
- B. Determination of age for swimming in the league meets shall be the swimmer's age on the first day of the program. Proof of age must be made available upon the request of the League Director.
- C. Age groups for competition shall be: 5-6; 7-8; 9-10; 11-12; 13-14; and 15-17. Participants must be at least 5 years of age.
- D. A swimmer must participate in at least two meets prior to divisional qualifying in order to be eligible for league championships. The only exception is in the 6 and under age group, where a swimmer only has to participate in one pre-divisional meet. The relay meet is considered an eligible meet.
- E. For many reasons, it is important that team participants meet minimum proficiency requirements. **Athletes ages 10 and younger must be able to swim 25 yards without assistance, eleven and older swimmers must be able to swim 50 yards in order to join a team. Participants unable to meet these minimums will be asked to move into our lesson program in order to strengthen their skills.**

RISKS

A parent or guardian signature is required on the registration form when registering for the swim program. WebTrac or TeleTrac registration: The form informs the parent of the risks associated with strenuous physical exertion when participating in competitive aquatic activities and injury may result. Mesa Parks and Recreation Division employees are not liable for any injury sustained in participating in the program including transportation to and from the activities. The supervisor, participants, and parents are also held harmless. If you have any questions about this please consult the League Director.

SWIM SUIT

- A. A team suit color is selected for each swim team. Youth are not required to wear a team suit; however we encourage participants to wear a suit in the team's color. Any swimsuit that is functional for competitive swimming is acceptable. **(String bikinis and shorts below the knee are not considered functional)**
- B. Team participants may purchase team suits from any vendor. Vendors in Mesa East Valley Sports 6306 E. Main St. 480-832-8172 and Ski Pro located at 1924 W. 8th St. 480-962-6910, Riverview.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I know if my child is ready for swim team?

- The first page of the handbook answers this question. Please remember that requirement is the minimum proficiency requirement. The coaches will introduce and work on the 4 competitive strokes, but this is **NOT** lessons.

2. If my child isn't ready for swim team do I get a refund?

- If you request it no later than Thursday of the first week of practice.

3. Is my child allowed to attend every weekly swim meet?

- Yes, we encourage participants to swim in the meets. Swim meets are how a swimmer sees his/her progress. If your child runs a risk of being disqualified at the meet for a stroke violation, then parents should be notified by their child's coach.

4. How do relays work?

- To allow every swimmer a chance to participate in a relay we have every swimmer swim a relay at the Freestyle meet. Please stick around after your child's individual race for this relay as it may be the only relay they swim this summer.

5. Why won't they be in a relay every week?

- As stated in our handbook under **Meet Organization**, every Wednesday is time trial day. Of the swimmers who do time trials the top 8 times create the relays for that week's meet. There are only 2 relays per team. ****If your child qualifies for a relay they must attend practice on Thursdays to practice with their relay team. If they aren't going to the meet, PLEASE let the head coach know.****

6. What is expected of parents and swimmers at weekly meets?

- **Swimmers:** 1) Arrive early enough to warm up with the team. 2) Stay in the team area at all times. Coaches can't look around for swimmers and we don't want them to miss their race. Please don't have them sit with you. 3) After swimming their race they need to come back to the team area for their relay (if they are on one) or to check out with a coach.
- **Parents:** 1) Get your swimmers to the pool early enough for warm ups. 2) Make sure they have their suits, goggles, towels, and water. 3) Please have your swimmer(s) stay in the team area and not sit with you. If they are with you they may miss their race. 4) Once your swimmer has swum their race and they aren't in a relay you are welcome to come get your swimmer and check out with a coach.

7. How does the IM Meet and Relay Meet work?

- These meets only take the **top legal** swimmers from each age group.
- The IM Meet only takes the top 4 girls and boys from each age group. No relays are swum.
- The Relay Meet takes the top 4 freestylers and top stroke swimmer from each age group. If the head coach doesn't tell them they are needed then you don't need to be worried about attending this meet.

8. What is divisionals?

- This meet needs to have a divisional form filled out and turned in by the deadline in order to swim. They can be found online or you can get a hard copy from your head coach.
- All swimmers swim in this meet and the top 16 swimmers advance to League Championships.

9. How do I know what strokes to pick?

- You have two choices—either ask your child what 3 strokes they want to swim or ask their coach what they should swim.
- Your coach will have their time trial times that should be entered onto the divisional form.



AWARDS AND MEET ORGANIZATION

A. Awards

1. Stroke Meets Ribbons will be given for all places to swimmers who legally complete the race. All races and relays are straight heats. Participant ribbons will be provided for disqualified participants.
2. Relay Meets Ribbons will be awarded for all places 1 - 11. This meet is for "A" relays only. Participation ribbons will be available for the teams that get disqualified.
3. Individual Medley Meets: Ribbons will be awarded for places 1 through 8. This meet is an "A" meet only.
4. Division Meets: Ribbons will be awarded for places 1 through 16 competing in these meets. All other swimmers will be awarded one participant ribbon for the meet.
5. League Championship Meets
 - a) Trophies will be awarded to age group high point winners and runners up.
High point: Points are given for the top ten places in each age group for each event during this meet only. First place=20/17/16/15/14/13/12/11/9/7
 - b) Medals will be awarded to places 1, 2, and 3 in the finals.
 - c) Ribbons will be awarded to places 4 - 8 in the finals.

B. Meet Organization and Administration

1. In stroke meets, each team will be allowed four entries for the "A" heats and unlimited entries for the "B" heats. All "B" heats will be "scrambled". There can be no changing from "A" to "B" in a meet.
2. Swimmers must attend their age group practice time every Wednesday for time-trials. Swimmers must also practice the relay with their team to be eligible to swim in the relay.
3. In the individual medley meet, teams will be limited to eight entries per event. This is an "A" level only meet.
4. In the relay meet, each team may enter only one "A" team per event. One younger swimmer may move up to provide enough swimmers for a relay. The relay meet will be conducted as a league meet, disregarding divisions. The relay meet will be scored, only medley and freestyle relays will be swum.
5. Stroke meets will be run in split sessions with 10 and under swimmers competing first. Swimmers ages 11 and older will compete in the second session. Warm-up for 11 and older swimmers follows the conclusion of the 10 and under session.
6. **During stroke meets straight heats will be run for all heats in ALL age groups.**
7. Bad Weather – The safety of the swimmers and spectators are very important. Stroke meets that are cancelled will not be rescheduled. You can call the pool or go to the pool to determine the decision on the meet.

Qualifying and championship meets must be swum. If bad weather occurs, the meet will be postponed until the weather clears. If the meet cannot be conducted on that day, it will be rescheduled. Participants must call or come down to the pool to determine the scheduled start time.

8. Division Meets: An entry form MUST be turned in for each athlete who wishes to participate. Athletes must check in for all events.

Swimmers must participate in the division meet to progress to league championships.

All age groups will swim during their divisional meet.



The top sixteen times from each Divisional Meet will qualify for the League Championship Meet. Two alternates will be named for each event. The alternates will be available to participate in their stated events only if one or more of the top sixteen qualifiers is unable to compete in the League Championship Meet. **League champs will run all age groups straight through; it will not be split sessions.**

9. The League Championship Meet will be run as championship final age group meet with the Divisional Meets being used as a qualifying meet.
10. There will be no exhibition swimmers entered in any events, in any meet.
11. The League Director will appoint the stroke and turn judges and starters for all divisional and league championship meets. The host team is responsible for assigning officials for stroke meets.
12. Protests will be heard only from the coach of the team concerned. Protests must be directed to the Head Swimming coach who will address parent concerns with the League Director.

C. Disqualification Policy

1. Recognizing that team members in the 5 – 6 age group have some problems with certain areas of technique, some allowances will be made in this age group such as giving the swimmer more than one stroke to reach the surface on a start on the breaststroke. This is not to say these children will not be disqualified. At no time will a swimmer be allowed to bend any rule that might enable them to defeat other swimmers in an unfair manner. Most rules can be met with little work. The philosophy is designed for the children to learn correct principles and they should not be rewarded for improper performances. Officials will strictly enforce the rules in all other age groups.

IX. BASIC RULES FOR COMPETITION

Starts: Swimmers must respond promptly to the command, "Take your mark." When all swimmers are set into a ready position, the starting signal will be given. Any swimmers leaving their ready position before the signal is given will be charged with a false start, except when the false start was caused by the action or movement of another competitor.

False Starts: If more than one swimmer leaves their ready position before the starting signal, the starter may award the false start to the field. This means the next swimmer to false start will be disqualified. **All swimmers will have one warning false start and will be disqualified on their next illegal start.**

Freestyle: A swimmer may swim any style. The crawl stroke is most frequently used. The swimmer must touch the wall with some part of their body at the turn and the finish.

Backstroke: The swimmer must push off on their back and remain on their back throughout the entire race. The swimmer's feet must touch the end of the pool on a turn. The swimmer's head, shoulder, and foremost hand or arm must touch the end of the pool on a finish. A swimmer's shoulders shall not go past vertical on the push off after a flip turn. For the start of the race; if the swimmer is 10 years old or younger their toes (or part of their feet) may be out of the water, if the swimmer is 11 years old or older, all parts of the swimmers feet must be under the surface of the water.

Butterfly: Both arms must be brought forward together over the water and recovered backwards underneath the water simultaneously. All up and down movement of the legs must be done simultaneously in the form of the dolphin kick. At the turn and finish, both hands must touch the wall at the same time, and on the same plane.

Breaststroke: All movement of arms and legs must be simultaneous. The hands cannot be brought back beyond the hipline, except during the stroke after the start and each turn. The feet must be turned (flexed) outward during the propulsive part of the kick. A scissors, flutter, or downward butterfly kick is not permitted. Both hands must touch the wall at the same time and on the same plane at each turn and the finish. The swimmer's head must clear the surface of the water once, per arm and leg cycle. The swimmer is allowed only one underwater pull after each turn and the start; the swimmers head must break the surface of the water before the widest part of the first pull.

Individual Medley: No crossover turn is allowed when changing from backstroke to breaststroke.

General Warm-Up: There will be no diving at any time during warm-up. Swimmers will enter feet first. The first ten minutes of warm-up will be designated as "*general warm-up.*"

Dive Lanes: Each team will be assigned two lanes next to each other, to dive in off the blocks and swim back in the other lane. The larger teams will use Lanes one and eight. Swimmers may only dive under the supervision of a coach. Warm-up begins 30 minutes prior to meet time.